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UNITED BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN ASIA

This is the new name of the United Board for Christian Colleges in China, adopted at their annual meeting on May 3, 1955. The purpose of the change of course is to reflect the change in the Board's activities since the exclusion of missionary activity from mainland China. Reports presented during the all-day meeting showed that the Board is now supporting primarily the work of three institutions in the East, Tunghai in Taichung, Formosa, Chungchi in Hong Kong, and to a lesser extent and more tentatively, Indonesian Christian University at Djakarta.

The appointment of Mr. Tseng Yo-nung as president of Tunghai University was announced. This Christian great-grandson of the famous Marquis Tseng Kuo-fan is a writer of distinction, was for some years president of K'e-ch'iang College in Changsha, and has more recently been professor of English Literature at Taiwan National University.

Besides the three institutions named above, other projects in Asia for which appropriations were made include fellowships, libraries, agricultural education, exchange of professors, visiting specialists, etc.

The main task of the Board undertaken in America is the Chinese Student and Alumni Services, a work which is about 80% supported by the Board and the remaining 20% by the China Committee. Commitment here is temporary, and the gradual closing off of responsibility for this work was marked this year by the closing of the center at Philadelphia.

Four more of the monographs on the former Christian universities in China were reported to be ready for the press, and the whole series, including the appraisal volume, is expected to be completed by July 1956.

That the work of the United Board is continuing to command the interest of American people is apparent, among other things, from the fact that bequests totaling \$400,000 were reported during the past year.

The program and budget as adopted for 1955-56 is as follows:

Services in North America	\$ 44,550
Services in Asia	440,500
Tunghai University	500,000
Research and Publication	10,000
New York expenditures	144,250
Total	\$1,139,300

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FREEDOM OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF

According to a report from the Moscow radio, Chou En-lai told the Bandung Conference that there is freedom of religious belief in China. He said, "Freedom of religious belief is a principle recognized by all modern nations. We Communists are atheists, but we respect all those who have religious beliefs. We hope that those with religious beliefs will respect those without. China is a country where there is freedom of religious beliefs. There are in China not only seven million Communists, but also tens of millions of Moslems and Buddhists and millions of Protestants and Catholics. Here in the Chinese delegation there is a pious man (priest) of the Islamic faith. Such a situation is no obstacle to the internal unity of China."

But lest this should give the impression that Chinese Christians have no particular opposition to overcome, it might be well here to summarize an article which appeared in Chung Kuo Ch'ing Nien (China Youth) for February 1, 1955. This magazine is officially recognized study material, and is required reading for all young people in China. The author is Wen Ch'ing and the name of his article is A Brief Treatise on the Question of Religion. He begins the article as an answer to certain impetuous young Communists who do not like to see people being indoctrinated with "passive, pessimistic and superstitious concepts about the universe", such as that "God created the world", and would therefore like to suppress religion altogether. In his answer the author admits that "religion reflects reality in a distorted way..... The Almighty is nothing but a reflection of the earthly emperor in heaven."

After a brief historical statement about the rise of religion, he goes on to point out the proper Communist procedure: After correct education the people will abandon their religious ideas of themselves. He quotes Chairman Mao as follows: "The idols were set up by the peasants, and in time they will pull them down with their own hands; there is no need for anybody else prematurely to pull down the idols for them. The agitational line of the Communist Party in such matters should be: 'Draw the bow to the full without letting go the arrow, and be on the alert.'"

Why is there still religion in the Soviet Union? There the social root of religion has been destroyed, but religion itself continues. This the writer explains as a "residue of the life of the old society", a part of the capitalist ideology that has not yet been shaken off. But the gradual improvement, under Socialist ideology, of economic conditions and of the control over nature will finally render religion superfluous, in both Russia and China.

As long as believers in religion are law-abiding, they are entitled to protection. But we must also remember that Communists can never endorse their idealistic and religious doctrines. "The two forms of world outlook are contradictory and cannot be mixed together. The Communists believe that dialectical materialism forms the world outlook of Marxism-Leninism and the theoretical foundation of Communism..... Youth should be given an ideological foundation on scientific world outlook, to make them into scientific atheists and heroic fighters for Socialist reconstruction."

It is quite clear from this article that a person has to swim against a strong current to be a Christian in China today. The only interpretation which I can give to the quotation from Chairman Mao about drawing the bow to the full is: Put all possible pressure upon religious believers to abandon their faith, short of an open program of religious persecution. And this is a more accurate description of the Communist position regarding religion than Chou En-lai's statement at Bandung.

PEKING AND AMOY UNIVERSITIES

The presidents of these two universities, Ma Yin-ch'u and Wang Ya-nan, wrote articles describing the reorganization of their schools, and these articles were published in Hong Kong on January 1. Ma Yin-ch'u stated that before reorganization Peking University consisted of six colleges: Arts, Science, Law, Engineering, Agriculture and Medicine. The last three colleges and part of Law were lopped off in the reorganization to form separate institutions, and then Arts, Science, and a part of the Law College combined with the old Tsinghua University to form a new Peking University, which was then moved to the Yenching campus which it now occupies. It now has 13 departments: Theoretical Mechanics, Physics, Biology, Geologic Geo-

graphy, History, Philosophy, Economics, Law, Chinese Language and Literature, Oriental Languages (including Mongolian, Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese, Hindi, Indonesian, Burmese, Chinese, and Arabic specialization majors), Russian Language and Literature (including Polish and Czech), Western Languages and Literature (including French, English, and German specialization majors). In addition, there is a course on Library Science. The University has a total of over 5,200 students, including 290 research Chinese students, 99 students of nine national minorities, 170 returned overseas Chinese students, and 250 alien students. All students receive free tuition and free board and lodging. Medical and dental care is also provided.

President Wang Ya-nan of Amoy University notes that the school was founded in 1921 by Tan Ta-kee. In October 1954 it had 1,726 students. The library has added 50,000 new books recently, mostly "Russian works and books on social sciences." The University has 106 buildings, capable of accommodating three or four thousand students. They expect a larger enrollment after Taiwan is "liberated". Since many of the overseas Chinese speak the "Hokien" dialect, namely, Amoy, this University pays special attention to caring for overseas students, with special classes to help them make up what they may be lacking in Chinese or in "social science" requirements. This University did not suffer any lopping off, as Peking did, but it has had a good deal, especially on the science and technology side, added on, and is now organized into twelve departments.

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS IN CITIES

On December 31, 1954, Mao Tse-tung signed a number of organic regulations setting up in municipalities Inhabitants' Committees, Street Offices, and Public Security Sub-stations.

A large municipality such as Shanghai is divided into several chu or wards, and each chu has its own People's Council. But since the chu is too large for effective local control, it is supplemented by sub-organizations representing local inhabitants, the Chu People's Council, and the Public Security Bureau respectively.

An Inhabitants' Committee should cover from 100 to 600 households; this again is subdivided into Inhabitants' Teams, covering from 15 to 40 households each. They may engage in social welfare work, and are to assist in carrying out the decisions of the government. The viewpoint of the inhabitants may be presented to the Chu People's Council by means of the Inhabitants' Committee.

The Street Office is a local sub-division of the chu government. Its tasks are (1) to undertake matters assigned by the People's Council, (2) to direct the work of Inhabitants' committees, and (3) to reflect the views and demands of the inhabitants. It is not clear whether there is one Street Office for each Inhabitants' Committee, or whether one Street Office might have several Inhabitants' Committees under its jurisdiction.

The Public Security Sub-station is a local sub-division of the municipal public security bureau. Each one covers the same area as the Street Office, but whereas the latter is concerned with general governmental matters, the former has to do with ferreting out counter-revolutionary activities and other crimes.

THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE

It will be remembered that the first plenary session of this Conference was held in September 1949, when it proclaimed the founding of the People's Republic, adopted a common platform, and in general exercised the functions of the National People's Congress. A great deal has happened since then, among other things the adoption of a Constitution which takes the place of the Common Platform, and the convening of the National People's Congress. It might be supposed that the CPPCC and its National Committee had now been superseded and would be dissolved. However in December 1954 a second National Committee for the CPPCC was set up and met in Peking. It has announced a continuing program of work of an advisory and propaganda nature. Just what its function in the political setup is is not made very clear, but since the various minor political parties have representation in it, its continuance seems to be for the purpose of maintaining the fiction of a "united front". "The CPPCC will continue to exist as an organization of the People's Democratic United Front for rallying all nationalities, democratic